

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 OES-07 DLOS-09 IO-13 ACDA-12 /110 W
-----096379 310656Z /11

R 310330Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9422
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USUN NEW YORK 770

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 0507

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, XO, CE

SUBJ: SOVIET ROVING AMBASSADOR MENDELEVICH'S BRIEFING ON
INDIAN OCEAN TO SRI LANKA MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
(MFA)

1. AMBASSADOR MENDELEVICH IN MARATHON FOUR HOUR MEETING
BRIEFED MFA OFFICIALS ON US-SOVIET BILATERAL INDIAN OCEAN
TALKS. HE ALSO DISCUSSED OTHER SUBJECTS OF GENERAL INTEREST
TO THE SRI LANKANS.

2. MENDELEVICH'S BRIEFING ON THE INDIAN OCEAN WAS DESCRIBED
BY ONE MFA OFFICIAL AS EXTREMELY DETAILED, IMPRESSIVE, AND
USEFUL. HE REPORTEDLY DID NOT SAY ANYTHING AT VARIANCE WITH
INFORMATION WE HAVE PROVIDED MFA ON THE INDIAN OCEAN TALKS.
HOWEVER, HE DID PRESENT THE ISSUES IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE
SOVIET POSITIONS APPEARED TO BE EMINENTLY REASONABLE WHEREAS
THE US POSITIONS WERE HARD LINE. MENDELEVICH WAS ENTHUSIASTIC
ABOUT THE TALKS AND CAME THROUGH AS BEING GUARDEDLY OPTIMISTIC
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THAT AN AGREEMENT WILL BE REACHED ON FREEZING THE LEVELS OF
US AND SOVIET PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.

3. ONE MFA OFFICIAL SPECULATED PURPOSE OF BRIEFING WAS POSSIBLY
TO ENLIST THIRD COUNTRY ASSISTANCE ON PARTICULAR ISSUES SHOULD
THE NEED ARISE OR TO INDICATE THAT THE ONUS WOULD BE ON THE
US SHOULD THE TALKS BREAK DOWN.

4. MFA OFFICIAL WHOM POLITICAL OFFICER HAD BEEN BRIEFING ON INDIAN OCEAN TALKS SAID HE APPRECIATED INFORMATION AND FELT IT WAS USEFUL, AS WAS THOMAS P. THORNTON'S (NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL) PRESENTATION ON SUBJECT. HOWEVER, MFA OFFICIAL HAD BEEN CLEARLY IMPRESSED BY MENDELEVICH'S FIRST HAND KNOWLEDGE OF THE TALKS AND HIS GRASP OF THE ISSUES. WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE MFA AS MUCH DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE PROGRESS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN TALKS AS POSSIBLE.

WRIGGINS

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